

# Youth Health Reform Administrator Conversations

## Tips and tricks for taking to your teachers and administrators about sexual education reform

You are likely here because you really want to take part in this campaign and start reforming sexual education at your school - but you are not sure how to start! Partaking in social activism can be quite hard, especially if you have no experience with it. But have no fear, Day of the Girl is here to help! We have developed a tried and true list of tips for approaching teachers, administrators, and other types of officials - the people who have the power to change things like curriculum and have written a whole toolkit about starting the conversation, which can be found [here](#). But all of this advice will be specifically geared towards what it will look like to campaign for the youth health reform movement.

### Important things to do:

- **Provide a list of demands.** Use our campaign checklist([link](#)) to determine where your school lacks in sex ed, and bring/send that to the official you're talking to. If you can tell them the specific things that need to happen, and discuss how to get the change you want, it will be easier to swallow, which means change is more likely to occur.
- **Be organized/specific.** When you're approaching an official, it's because they have information that you want or can do something that you need to have happen. So, they will be more likely to take you seriously if you have thought through what you are going to say to them.
- **Have backup.** To make change happen, this campaign needs support. Every student deserves a well-rounded and healthy sexual education - so get some friends to come with you! Or, if your school has one, join forces with your feminism club or GSA. Most of these people will probably have similar interests in mind.
- **Provide resources.** Show the official that you are talking to our press release([link](#)), if necessary, and talk to them about the appalling state of sex ed in our country. You have legitimate reasons for wanting to change things, so come prepared.
- **Do your research.** If your administrator or official asks a question about your proposal, you should be able to respond thoroughly. Make sure you know what the legal requirements for your state are, and how your school's curriculum fits into them.
- **Be confident!** An official will take you much more seriously when you sound and seem like you know what you're talking about. Even if you are nervous, take yourself seriously, and so will the person you are talking to.
- **Take notes.** This is so that throughout the meeting, you can refer to what the school really wants for its students. Also, you won't have to ask them to constantly repeat themselves if you forget something that they said.
- **Questions to ask:**

- *Who designs/writes my school's sex ed curriculum?* Your health teacher might not be the culprit in a lacking sexual education program. Still, go to your teacher or principal and find out who to talk to about why the curriculum is the way it is.
- *Who enforces my school's curriculum?* It's possible that there are requirements that slip through the cracks in the class, for any number of reasons. This is another good question for your health teacher or school administrator.
- *Why does the curriculum look like this?* This is something to ask a higher up administrator, like a school board member or superintendent. Each state varies in its legal requirements for what schools should be teaching, so you may need to go as high as a state representative's office to create change.

## Script

Not quite sure how exactly to start the conversation? Day of the Girl is here to help! This is a script for you to begin the conversation with administrators, teachers, and officials. It includes good things to say and responses for possible reactions you may get.

Here are some examples of what you could possibly start with! Try not to start off your meeting right away with harsh, blunt questions. Rather, ask some more general questions.

1. **How was our health curriculum evolve to be the way it is today?**
2. **What are the ultimate goals of the health curriculum?**
3. **What benefits does the health curriculum provide to our student body?**
4. **Who designs the health curriculum?**

Your principal or administrator will respond by (hopefully) explaining with detail the conception of your school's curriculum, as well as its objectives and positive effects.

After they reply with some general information about the health curriculum, it's time to start getting to the point.

1. Before you delve into the problems with your curriculum, talk about what you do like about the health curriculum, and why it is useful!  
IE:
  - I like how the health curriculum discusses (insert topic here) at really great length.
  - I feel like I learned a lot about (insert topic here).
  - The fact that we learned about (insert topic here) is really important.

Your administrator will hopefully react rather positively here..

2. Now, discuss what issues you have with the health curriculum. Explain the reasons why these are problems. Is the curriculum not relevant enough? Does your school skip over something you think is important?

IE:

- I think we spend too much time on (insert topic here).
  - I think we spend too little time on (insert topic here).
  - I wish we could talk about (insert topic here).
  - I think a better way of learning about (insert topic here) is...
3. At this point in the conversation, there are a lot of different ways in which your administrator could respond.
    - a. Remember to maintain your composure. **Listen, think, and then respond.**
    - b. Remember it's completely possible that the health curriculum is not in your school's control. It could be in the control of your state's government.
  4. If they say that a certain topic must be covered...
    - a. Listen to all the reasons that your administrator has to give.
      - i. Do they think that it's important to a teenager's overall health and wellbeing?
      - ii. Do they think that it's relevant to a youth?
  5. If they say that a certain topic not being covered is a good thing...
    - a. Listen to all the reasons that your administrator has to give.
      - i. Do they think that it's not important to a teenager's overall health and wellbeing?
      - ii. Do they think that it's not relevant to a youth?
      - iii. Do they think that it would somehow have a negative impact on students if they learned about it?
  6. If they don't understand why the way something being taught is not right...
    - a. Listen to all the reasons that your administrator has to give.
    - b. Offer some other possible ways that a topic can be taught.
      - i. Updated films
      - ii. Group projects
      - iii. Getting speakers to present

## Contact Information

If you have any more questions or need further information, here's how to contact those of us who are focused on this project:

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